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WRALC earns award

01/12/07

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By RAY LIGHTNER

Journal Staff Writer

The Warner Robins Air Logistics Center was selected as recipient of the 2006 Franz Edelman Award for achievement in operations research.

In May 2006 the Institute for Operations Research and Management Sciences announced the WRALC C-5 team was selected. Mark Doherty, executive director of INFORMS presented Maj. Gen. Tom Owen, WR-ALC Commander and the C-5 team the Franz Edelman engraved trophy on Wednesday in a ceremony in the C-5 with a plane's cargo area serving as the stage.

This is the fourth award for the C-5 team. In September, the C-5 Programmed Depot Maintenance Process Improvement Team of the 559th Maintenance Wing was awarded the Chief of Staff of the Air Force Team Excellence Award for 2006 for vastly reducing the time it takes to put the much-used planes back in the hands of the warfighters.

The C-5 team at Robins has been identified as a benchmark team by the Air Force for those efforts. It also received the Shingo Gold Award in 2005 and 2006, Owen noted.

Owen, who formerly headed the C-5 team during its transition from San Antonio to Robins said the "improvement is beyond our wildest dreams."

He credited "the team members, the men and women on the floor," of the 402nd Maintenance Group and the 559th Air Maintenance Squadron for their efforts, which "approved the lean process, produced a big savings for our customer and returned the planes to the warfighters."

Owen said "Air Mobility Command is very pleased, they asked me 'can you bring more work to Warner Robins?' We'll certainly do what we can."

The award, he said, "it's a challenge to us to continue down the path of improving."

Owen also credited partnership with the improvements. "Taking diverse strengths and bringing them together is my man goal her at Warner Robins. Partnering with the community, local education and the defense industry."

Working with Realization Technologies and faculty from the University of Tennessee, WRALC used a technique called critical chain project management to reduce the number of C-5 aircraft being repaired and overhauled from 13 to seven in just eight months. The time required to repair and overhaul the C-5 was reduced by 33 percent.

Doherty said the C-5 team efforts produced a savings of \$50 million per year, and the technique has been extended to the C-17



and C-130 teams. The additional workload the WRALC is accommodating in the dock spaces freed up will bring in additional revenue of \$119 Million through 2008, with this number projected to increase to \$248 Million by 2009.

INFORMS is an international scientific society with 10,000 members, including Nobel Prize laureates, dedicated to applying scientific methods to help improve decision-making, management, and operations. The award is named after Franz Edelman, a refugee from Nazi Germany who worked at RCA and established the operations research group there.

The award is referred to as the "Super Bowl of Operations Research" and brings together the best examples of innovation from large and small, for profit and nonprofit, corporate and governmental organizations around the world.

Past winners include: General Motors, Motorola, the Israeli Air Force, Continental Airlines and the City of San Francisco Police Department.

The other 2006 nominees were Animal Health Institute and Cox Associates, the US Commercial Aviation Partnership, Omya Hustadmarmor and More Research/Molde University College and Travelocity & Sabre Holdings. Doherty also announced the 2007 Franz Edelman award finalists. They include: • Coca-Cola, for a project entitled "Optimizing Distribution at Coca-Cola Enterprises"

- The U.S. Coast Guard, for "Maximizing Aircraft Availability by Managing Aircraft Maintenance Throughput at the U.S. Coast Guard Aircraft Repair and Supply Center" • Hewlett-Packard, for "Procurement Risk Management at Hewlett-Packard Company"

- Daimler Chrysler and J.D. Power and Associates for "PIN Incentive Planning System: A Decision Support System for Planning Automobile Manufacturers' Pricing and Promotions" • Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center for "Operations Research Answers to Cancer Therapeutics"

- Halifax Bank of Scotland and Nomis Solutions for "Halifax Bank of Scotland Increases Profits in Consumer Lending through Price Optimization."

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